121 what people want to hear. In this short talk I would like to deal more with the feeling of these buildings as related to the people who live in them and who have created them. If time allows I hope to show a short colour film I made there and which portrays general scenes of life in Hadhramaut.

122 There is one thing I can say without any hesitation or doubt, and that is to give expression to my great gratitude to those who helped me to go on these journeys. I could not possibly mention by name all those to whom I am indebted, but at least I wish to speak of Sir Bernard Reilly of the Colonial Office, who made it possible for me to go to Hadhramaut and gave me the necessary introductions. I also want to thank Dr. Serjeant of the School of Oriental and African Studies of London University, who taught me for two years and who showed me everything I had to know in order to travel in that strange and isolated country he had himself visited. Finally, I am most grateful to Colonel Hugh Boustead, Resident Adviser of the East Aden Protectorate, who facilitated my journey in every possible way. He was my kind host and gave me travel facilities and permits to go where many people had difficulty in going.

131 To plunge into my subject, I might say that one does in fact almost plunge into the Hadhramaut from above. It is one of those rare countries which cannot be reached by rail or by road and hardly by sea except on a little native dhow; so that since the British Protectorate authorities started to develop the country it has been habitual to go to Hadhramaut by plane, and one does indeed drop into it from the sky. Such isolation is rare in our times and needs some explanation for those not familiar with the geography of Southern Arabia.

131 Arabia has always been one of the most difficult countries of access to
133 Europeans, for geographical as well as religious reasons. In the centre of the peninsula is one of the largest deserts in the world, and it is surrounded by forbidding coastal ranges from halfway up the Red Sea coast, down to the "barren rocks of Aden" and eastward along the southern coast, almost three-quarters of its length before there is any break in the mountains.

But for small valleys, these mountains and the interior are absolutely barren. With the exception of the Yemen, to all intents and purposes, little or nothing grows in that vast area. There is no water. There is little earth, and in the relentless mountain ranges and plateaux along the coast there is often not even sand—just rock and flint and granite. Yet these coastal ranges are crossed in all directions by ageless tracks made by camel trains of the bedouin traders who have followed them for two thousand, perhaps three thousand years, bringing the incense from Dhufar beyond Hadhramaut.

101 The people who now live in the interior highlands are the bedouin,
[342] the descendants of the traders of old, who dwell in small stone-built villages or mud castles. This south-western corner is still largely a tribal area where there are different little bedouin sultanates. Some of them are being gradually brought into the confederation and some even accept complete British protection; others live entirely in their own ancient way of
000 life of blood feuds and strife. Some miles out of Aden a sultan recently

thought that we had some slight chance of succeeding, and they gave us loyal cooperation.

Thus we landed at Makalla on Sunday, May 3, accompanied only by my Yemenite servant. The Sultan was away as usual, and his vizier read the letters of introduction from our minister of foreign affairs and from the Governor of Aden. We were very well accommodated in one of the Sultan's former palaces, and then began the task of waiting for the great decision as to whether we might enter the country. The same evening we had the good fortune to meet a member of the family al-'Attās, which is very friendly with the government of the Dutch Indies. He had received a telegram from his father instructing him to give all possible help to the Dutch representative of the government in his anticipated journey in Hadramaut. The Sayyid family of al-'Attās, together with the closely allied family of al-Kāf, belongs to the leading group in Hadramaut proper. Two great parties, which are hostile to one another, are contesting for the power in this country, namely, the āl-Qa'ētī, who have their headquarters at Makalla, and the āl-Kathīr, with headquarters at Sēwun. The āl-Qa'ētī sultans take their cue from the English, and, thanks to English help, have authority in the coast region. The āl-Kathīr are more independent, and reside in Hadramaut proper, that is, in the broad valley in the interior which has that name. The Sayyids boast of being directly descended from the son-in-law of the Prophet, and in Hadramaut society hold a distinct and very privileged position. They have great influence with the government, but leave the actual business for the most part to the non-sayyids. The immediate and whole-hearted support of the al-'Attās certainly did our enterprise a great deal of good, for on the following day we received the promise that we might go inland. However, the great difficulties of the journey, especially at this time of the year (one of the hottest months), were expressly pointed out to us; and we were urgently dissuaded from crossing the

16: Gardner A-4 (1937-38) 1939 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

CLIMATE, IRRIGATION, AND EARLY MAN IN THE HADHRAMAUT

G. CATON-THOMPSON AND E. W. GARDNER

Afternoon Meeting of the Society, 7 November 1938

000 IN a land as little known as South-west Arabia there is danger to the scientific traveller of getting lost. Not lost in the geographical sense, though at times that might be easy in the unending monotony of its valley floors and desert plateaux, but lost in the intricacies of a myriad detailed observations concerning them and the parts they played thousands of years ago in the lives of their inhabitants. The traveller crawls about like an ant amongst the dust heaps, collecting facts; facts related and unrelated, important and unimportant, which eventually, perhaps years hence and in other hands, go to the making of an ever-incomplete picture. He may be envious of the all-embracing synthetic view, such as the airman may obtain; but he remains aware that his microscopic, analytic rummaging amongst the individual stones is the indispensable element in eventual comprehension of the whole. Such reflections are not an inappropriate preface to this paper, which is the record of hitherto unrecorded facts. That the unimportant may not have been winnowed yet from the important is recognized: it is too soon to be sure which is which, or what may be the wider relevance of any of them.

114 122 The archaeological and geological work in the Hadhramaut now to be outlined, pending a detailed publication of the whole, took place during the winter of 1937–38, between November and early March. It was made possible as much by a generous grant from Lord Wakefield, with the support of this Society, as by the facilities of entry into the country given by the Aden and Mukalla administration, and not least by the Arab potentates in Qu'aiti and Kathiri territory, whose proverbial hospitality we were privileged to experience. The party consisted of Freya Stark, already a well-known and observant traveller in the country; Elinor Gardner,[1] who has contributed the major part of this paper; and myself.

114 121 Scientifically the land, though beginning to be well known in its main topographical features, has escaped intensive study to a degree now rare, and therefore it offered a number of attractive pioneer problems to geologist and archaeologist alike. On the archaeological side the ground, in common with all Arabia Felix, was virtually *terra incognita*. Not a single date before the Christian era was fixed; almost anything might turn up. A prearranged plan of research in view of the uncertainties of the field was impossible. Nevertheless objectives have to be clarified, and mine were broadly threefold. First, to bridge the gap in palaeolithic distribution maps between East Africa and Asia. Secondly to test it as an area of possible contact with the Makran coast, Mesopotamia, and India in the third and fourth millennia. Thirdly to investigate the material culture of its pre-Islamic inhabitants, and by its

[1] My contribution is confined to the archaeological sections and to the form and general supervision of this paper in Miss Gardner's absence.

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